

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM PARTICIPATION GRANT SUMMARY

MARCH 10, 2004

This past summer, USDA awarded the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services a \$1.7 million grant to develop and implement Internet-based access tools for Food Stamps, Medicaid, and other programs. The project is designed to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program and other benefit programs, improve customer service, reduce benefit errors, and ease workload for caseworkers.

With these tools, potentially eligible people and service providers can use a simple Internet site to:

- Assess whether they appear to be eligible for Food Stamps, Medicaid, SeniorCare, WIC, and other state and local programs.
- Apply online for Food Stamps and Medicaid.
- Get information online about their current Food Stamp or Medicaid benefits
- Report household or income changes online to a caseworker

Timeline

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| August 2004 | Online self-assessment tool for Food Stamps, Family Medicaid and SeniorCare. |
| December 2004 | Adding EBD Medicaid, WIC and other state-level programs to the self-assessment tool. |
| October 2005 | Online application, query and change reporting tools. |
| January 2006 | Adding selected county-level programs to the self-assessment tool. |

Community Involvement

To test how and where these tools will be most effective, we will establish formal partnerships with four community-based sites in Milwaukee, two Community Action Agencies (CAAs) in suburban or rural areas of Wisconsin, several WIC agencies, and several tribal health facilities. These formal partners will serve as “demonstration sites”: they will receive project funding for equipment and/or staffing in exchange for a structured evaluation of the Internet-based tools and the specific-service delivery model used at the demonstration site.

Because the tools will be available through a publicly accessible web site, we will encourage other community agencies to provide access and referral to the tools for their clients. These “Community Access Points” will help us reach a broad audience of potential program participants.

We have also established formal partnerships with the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association and Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee to provide technical assistance to the project.

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